



## LEARNING ORGANISATION A STUDY AMONG EMPLOYEES OF A LOGISTIC FIRM

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### **Abstract:**

In this era of globalisation, an organisation should become more flexible, responsive and capable of ensuring development in order to ensure its survival. Continuous learning becomes essential for surviving and prospering in dynamic and competitive environments. All organisations learn from diverse culture trends. While reviewing the empirical literature it is found that without proper learning, no organisation would survive in changing and competitive environments. The learning is also achieved with proper communication, teamwork and management. A study undertaken among employees of a logistic firm taking into consideration the four dimensions of Learning Organisations ie., Strategic Thrust, Shared Vision, Empowerment and Information Flow revealed that this Logistic Organisation is a learning organisation strong in the dimensions of Strategic Thrust(58%), Shared Vision(54%) and Empowerment(53%) and needs improvement in Information Flow(45%).

**Key Words:** Learning Organisation, Strategic Thrust, Shared Vision, Empowerment & Information Flow

### **Introduction:**

In this era of globalisation, an organisation should become more flexible, responsive and capable of ensuring development in order to ensure its survival. Continuous learning becomes essential for surviving and prospering in dynamic and competitive environments. A learning organisation facilitates members at all levels to continuously learn and transform and such learning takes place from diverse work force sharing diverse culture trends. As organisations learn to become stable, the need for learning is reduced but today all organisations operate in a dynamic environment of technological changes, intense competition, customer expectation with resource constraints posing pressure on organisations to continuously learn.

### **Characteristics of Learning Organisation:**

- ✓ Learning organisations allow a systematic flow of information to measure the performance of the organisation.
- ✓ The processes in learning organisations allow individual commitment.
- ✓ Learning organisations create an environment for individuals to learn and change attitudes in open culture (Haley Connie K. & Lazoukas Lorraine,1998)
- ✓ Learning organisations not only motivates but creates direction for learning and transformation.
- ✓ Learning organisations result in increased problem solving capacities through better access to knowledge and expertise.
- ✓ Entire process in learning organisations is team based creating a healthy result oriented culture.
- ✓ Learning organisations work on the system of feedback.

### **Dimensions of Learning Organisation:**

- ✓ **Strategic Thrust:** Strategic thrust defines the patterns of things to be done in an order, and choosing the most crucial actions. It also involves knowing, understanding and prioritising work. This involves questioning current thinking and not resting on past and current success.
- ✓ **Shared Vision:** Vision of the organisation is developed through participation at all levels. This inspires individuals to link the vision with their personal goals thereby creating commitment among members of the organisation and fostering transformational leadership.
- ✓ **Empowerment:** Empowerment enables delegation of authority resulting in decentralisation which further leads to proper direction, support and trust with appropriate rewards for initiation.
- ✓ **Information Flow:** In a learning organisation there is enough information shared among all levels of management, both positive and negative which result in reducing the rumours and encouraging the exchange of ideas. Such information helps in effective planning and control.

In this context, a study was undertaken among employees working in a logistic firm with an aim to understand the effectiveness of the four dimensions on it and also find out the strengths and areas for improvement.

### **Need for the Study:**

Change is a continuous process. Various factors in business and organisational competitiveness highlight the need for continuous learning at all levels of employment. These factors include the expanding global economy and global competition, new inventions and innovations, fast changing and upgraded

technology, customer expectations, quality management, demographic changes, and new acquired skills. These factors compel organisations to adjust quickly and adopt new ways of operating to remain competitive.

Continuous learning becomes essential for surviving and prospering in dynamic and competitive environments. Any organisation sticking to the traditional management policies cannot incorporate cultural change and withstand competitive environment. While reviewing the earlier studies, it is evident that without proper learning no organisation can survive in changing and competitive environment (Robbins and Coulter, 2005). This learning includes efficient leadership, managerial attitude and change management. The learning is also achieved with proper communication, teamwork and management. Hence continuous learning paves the way for efficiency and success of organisations.

#### **Objectives:**

To measure the level of learning in a logistic firm with reference to the four dimensions of a Learning Organisation - Strategic Thrust, Shared Vision, Empowerment and Information Flow.

#### **Hypotheses:**

H<sub>0</sub>1: There is no significant difference between employees' educational qualification and the four dimensions of learning organisation.

H<sub>0</sub>2: There is no significant difference between employee experience (in years) and the four dimensions of learning organisation.

#### **Scope of the Study:**

The study is confined to employees working in a logistic firm.

#### **Methodology:**

The study follows descriptive research design. The population for the study are management and field employees working in a logistic firm. Thus census study is adopted.

Table 1: Distribution of Population based on Education Qualification and Years of Experience

Bases of Classification	Category	No. of Individuals	Population Size
Education Qualification	Post Graduate	40	80
	Under Graduate	40	
Years of Experience	Less than 5 years	39	80
	More than 5 years	41	

Source: Primary Data

Primary data was collected using a standardised scale developed by Pareek Uday and Purohit Surabhi,(2002) with an inventory that consist of 24 items with 6 questions for each of the four dimensions of learning organisation namely Strategic Thrust, Shared Vision, Empowerment and Information Flow. Interview schedule was adopted to collect data. Secondary data used for the study are e-journals and internet. SPSS was used to test the hypotheses and generate multi variant tables. Bar diagram was used to present the data.

#### **Findings and Discussions:**

Table 2: Frequency Distribution of Strong and Weak Perceptions with Reference to the Four Dimensions of Learning Organisation

Dimension	Strong		Weak	
	No. of Responses	Percentage	No. of Responses	Percentage
Strategic Thrust	46	58	34	43
Shared Vision	43	54	37	46
Empowerment	42	53	38	48
Information Flow	36	45	44	55

Source: Primary Data

The above table reveals that 58% of the employees are able to prioritise their work with proper understanding and planning showing that the employees have a strong 'Strategic Thrust' (Bhattacharya Sonali et. al., 2017). 54% of employees are able to link vision with personal goals thereby creating commitment among members of the organisation and fostering transformational leadership showing strong 'Vision' (Rijal Sapna et. al., 2009 & Izham Mohd.et.al., 2011). 53% of the employees feel there is appropriate delegation of authority and effective reward system leading to strong 'Empowerment'. 45% of employees feel there is a deficiency in internal exchange and free flow of information which hinders effective planning and control leading to weak 'Information Flow'.

H<sub>0</sub>1: There is no significant difference between employees' educational qualification and the four dimensions of Learning Organisation.

Table 3: Difference between Educational Qualification and the Four Dimensions of Learning Organisation

Factors	Mean		Standard Deviation		t value	P value
	PG	UG	PG	UG		
Strategic Thrust	50.94	52.56	6.532	5.347	-1.214	0.229
Shared Vision	51.24	52.68	5.636	6.633	-1.046	0.299

Empowerment	51.24	53.04	6.843	5.6429	-1.283	0.203
Information Flow	50.1	52.92	6.571	5.46	-2.087	0.040*

Note: \* denotes significance at 1% level, \*\*denotes significance at 5% level

Source: Primary Data

From the above table it can be seen that there is no significant difference between Educational Qualification and the three factors of Learning Organisation-Strategic Thrust, Shared Vision and Empowerment as the P value is greater than 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted with regard to the three factors of Learning Organisation-Strategic Thrust, Shared Vision and Empowerment. However, there is significant difference between Educational Qualification and Information Flow as the P value is less than 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected with regard to the factors of learning organisation - Information Flow. It can therefore be concluded that Educational Qualification has a significant influence on Information flow.

H<sub>0</sub>2: There is no significant difference between Employee Experience and the four dimensions of Learning Organisation.

Table 4: Difference between Years of Experience and the Four Dimensions of Learning Organisation

Factors	Mean		Standard Deviation		t value	p value
	Years of Experience		<5 years	>5 years		
Strategic Thrust	52.24	51.27	6.974	4.911	0.721	0.473
Shared Vision	52.73	51.21	6.502	5.795	1.104	0.273
Empowerment	51.5	52.74	7.09	5.459	-0.875	0.384
Information Flow	50.7	52.27	6.764	5.512	-1.137	0.259

Note: \* denotes significance at 1% level, \*\*denotes significance at 5% level

Source: Primary Data

From the above table it can be seen that there is no significant difference between years of experience and the four factors of Learning Organisation-Strategic Thrust, Shared Vision, Empowerment and Information Flow as the P value is greater than 0.05. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level. It can therefore be concluded that years of experience of employees have no influence on the four dimensions of Learning Organisation.

#### Suggestions:

It is found that compared to 'Information Flow'(45%), the other three dimensions of 'Strategic Thrust'(58%), 'Shared Vision'(54%) and 'Empowerment'(53%) are high. In order to strengthen 'Information Flow' special attention can be given to the following areas:

- ✓ Managers should discuss constructively with employees about the mistakes committed by them in order to avoid similar mistakes in the future.
- ✓ Managers must be tolerant and encouraging with minor mistakes made by employees.
- ✓ Managers should support, encourage and have a reward system for employees taking risks. This would increase the Information Flow in the organisation and enhance the loyalty of employees towards the organisation.
- ✓ Employees must be allowed to contribute in developing company's mission, vision and goals. Such 'Information Flow' would make the employees own the organisation and stay committed.
- ✓ Team work can be encouraged across different levels. This would increase 'Information Flow' and develop interpersonal relations among the employees.
- ✓ In order to improve 'Information Flow', Managers should welcome, accept and encourage criticism from their employees.
- ✓ Ideal and appropriate channels of communication must be used to enhance 'Information Flow'.

Additional attention may be given to the following:

- ✓ Regular feedback must be provided to employees by managers
- ✓ Creative ideas and innovations should be encouraged, recognized and rewarded.
- ✓ Regular employee training and development must be given importance

#### Conclusion:

Learning organisation has become crucial in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Any learning organisation readily welcomes changes and adapts accordingly to such changes. Simultaneously they welcome such changes to rejuvenate resulting in high performance in a short period with long term survival. This study reiterates the previous reviews that management's effort through commitment and leadership is necessary not only for itself, but to facilitate learning of employees. This logistic Organisation is found to be a learning organisation and seeks some improvement only in the dimension of 'Information Flow'.

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